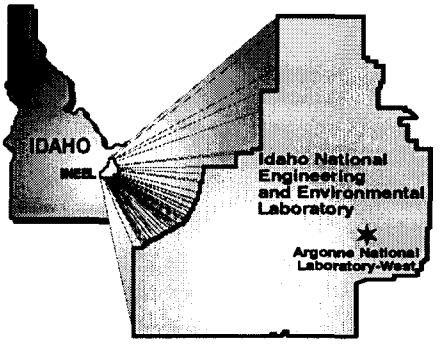
NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY

Agencies agree to change cleanup approach at Argonne National Laboratory-West



The U.S. Department of Energy, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Idaho Department of Environmental Quality have agreed to change the cleanup method for contaminated areas at Argonne National Laboratory-West on the Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory.

The change involves removal and disposal of contaminated soils instead of using phytoremediation – a process that uses plants to remove contamination from soil. The change will result in more rapid cleanup that will be completed this year.

The Record of Decision, signed in 1998, selected phytoremediation for the cleanup of eight sites at ANL-W. Phytoremediation has worked well for several of the sites, but will not be practical for cleaning up the Industrial Waste Pond because the pond may be used in the future for industrial cooling water discharge. Plants used for phytoremediation could not survive being regularly covered by water.

Portions of two ditches that underwent four years of phytoremediation still have small areas of residual metal contamination. Rather than continuing with phytoremediation, the soil in these small areas will now be removed to meet remediation goals established in the Record of Decision.

The waste pond soils will be disposed of on-site in the INEEL CERCLA Disposal Facility. The soils are contaminated with both metals (e.g., mercury, chromium, zinc and selenium) and the radioactive element cesium-137. The ditch soils will be disposed of in the CFA Landfill Complex since they do not contain radioactive contamination or chemical contaminants that pose a risk to human health.

The change in remedy is documented in an Explanation of Significant Differences document because the end result has not been changed. Post-action risk levels and cleanup goals are staying the same. The removal of these soils will be the last active remediation at ANL-W.

Detailed information is available in the Administrative Record file for Operable Unit 9-04. The Administrative Record is located at the DOE Reading Room of the INEEL Technical Library in Idaho Falls. Copies can be found at Albertsons Library at Boise State University. The Administrative Record can be accessed on the Internet at http://ar.inel.gov/home.html

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